

April 9, 1974

it. It's about complicated a structure as you could find. But this complicated structure was not accidental. It was built this way on purpose. And the implication is this. We can do better for children, retarded children, if we treat them in odd-shaped rooms, not in square rectangular rooms but in odd-shaped rooms. And the implication of this is further that if you can do better for children in odd-shaped rooms, when and if you ever want to take them out, it would be a step backwards. It would be a retrogression. Now is this true in your mind, in your thinking? I find this very difficult to believe, that by putting children in pie-shaped rooms, we're doing something better for them. And when we take them out some day, when we say can you go back to your home, what insurance do we have that the people there will not say, oh...well, we can't take them out of these wonderful pie-shaped rooms, it would be a step backwards to put them in an ordinary room. Does this make sense? I honestly don't think this is what the Budget Committee had in mind when we adopted this money. I would rather stand up here and be beaten by iron bars than oppose Senator Carstens. I'll ask any member of the Budget Committee if I ever voted against anything for Beatrice State Home. I worked to get more employees. I worked to get them higher salary. I did everything in my power. I visited that place three or four times. I voted for cottages. I did everything that any human being could possibly do to help Beatrice State Home. I've voted for extra money on deficiency so their employees could get more money. I've always felt that we've not done right and I supported the cottages. But if this plan goes through, as I told you, I have been told by the people who have the federal lawsuit now against Beatrice, they're going to make the design of these buildings a part of that lawsuit. If that happens, these buildings won't be built next year...period. That was the intent of my motion. That we have a simpler plan. That we go ahead and build the cottages, get the job done, and don't tie it up in lawsuit. I want the cottages to be built. I think nothing could be more reasonable than that. If we go ahead with this plan, I can guarantee you a year from now, you will not see any cottages. It'll be in that lawsuit. And if something happens to the children, then I can't say it's been my fault because I tried to remedy the situation.

PRESIDENT: All right, Senator Whitney.

SENATOR WHITNEY: No response.

PRESIDENT: The motion is to just suspend the rules and take up LB1056. We actually haven't got down to the specific amendment or what we're going to do with returning the bill, etc.

SENATOR WHITNEY: Yes, and I think, Mr. President, that we should discuss this to determine whether or not we should bring it up. Now, I think we are very fortunate.....

(End of Belt 2)

(Begin Belt 3)

to have a member of this Legislature, Senator Stahmer, who has been in the building business. And he knows the building costs. And when you take a family of four equivalent here,